



Merrow Residents' Association
www.merrowresidents.org
Andrew Strawson,
Court House. 4 Abbots Way
Guildford. GU1 2XP
chairman@merrowresidents.org

Ms Hannah Yates
Planning Officer
Guildford Borough Council
Millmead House
Guildford
GU2 4BB

4th May 2023

Dear Ms Yates

23/P/00417: Outline planning application for construction of up to 70 new homes (C3), the formation of a new means of access onto Ockham Lane, new footpaths and cycle routes, the creation of areas of open space, including play space and allotments, new surface water drainage, new landscaping and habitat creation, ground works and other infrastructure for land adjacent to Ockham Lane, Ockham, GU23 6NT

We write to object to the above planning application.

Firstly since this development is so closely linked with planning application 22/P/01175 which has yet to be determined it would be ludicrous for this application to be taken forward until 22/P/01175 is determined.

Upton End is part of the wider Wisley New Settlement site. The lead contractor, Taylor Wimpey, has a submitted planning application (22/P/01775) for 1,730 dwellings. All of the key infrastructure to support WNS falls within the Taylor Wimpey section of site and none is proposed to be delivered by the Upton End development. In addition the application proposes absolutely no supporting structures on site and there are no local public transport connections. All of this is made clear when the applicant states that *"The proposed development is complementary to and co-ordinated with development proposals adjacent to it."*

Nevertheless we do feel it necessary to comment and object to this application in more detail since we are so concerned at the level of uncontrolled traffic that will flow from the whole of the Wisley development that will affect the whole area including Merrow. We are also concerned at the lack of meaningful mitigation measures.

We take the view that Guildford Borough Council with the support of Surrey County Council should produce a detailed transport strategy covering the traffic from the new

developments that are in the 2019 Guildford Local Plan- and those that will affect Mellow are Gosden Hill Farm, Garlicks Arch and the Wisley airfield although other developments such as the Weyside Urban Village are also likely to have an effect. It seems particularly unhelpful to even consider the approval of these sites without the approval of the infrastructure improvements that will be necessary. This is putting the cart before the horse. We are all aware that traffic congestion in Guildford is one of the worst in the whole of England and air pollution from the A3 seems to be the highest in the country by some margin. This will only get worse if Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council continue to ignore the fact that there is an impending problem.

Policy A25 in the 2019 Guildford Local Plan contains requirements (1) to (2) in the Transport Strategy covering access to the A3, the A3100 and an all movements junction of the A3 with the A3100, the B2215 and the A247. We now know that the suggestion of a 4 way junction on the Gosden Hill Farm site doesn't have the support of the Highways Authority. As an Association we have majored on our concerns that traffic from Gosden Hill Farm destined for London will either have to be routed through Burpham or the outskirts of Mellow in order to join the A3. That point was accepted by the Inspector who examined the Guildford Local Plan who required that the possibility of a connector road should be included in policy A25 to the B2215 London Road/A247 Clandon Road.

We look no further than the transport strategy requirement condition (4) of Policy A35 of the Guildford Local Plan where it is stated that *'the identified mitigation to address the impacts on Ripley High Street and the surrounding rural roads comprises two new slip roads at A247 Clandon Road (Burnt Common Slips) and associated traffic management'*. We are aware that the land for the two slip roads is now owned by Guildford Borough Council and is the subject of an internal consultation by National Highways who are proposing to bring forward a report with some recommendations later this year. Would it not be wise to at least put this application on hold until the recommendations from National Highways are published?

Turning now to Government Guidance we are drawn to paragraphs 104 to 113 of the NPPF which state that in relation to promoting sustainable transport that.....transport issues should be considered..... including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, that the development will ensure that any significant impacts on the transport network can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree and that a transport plan shall be provided.

The NPPF and Government Guidance majors on the importance of sustainability and the need to encourage sustainable means of transport such as buses and cycles and car sharing. It is clear that this development does not benefit from an existing public transport network, is remote from other villages and towns, and that cars will have an important role for those who wish to have access to the rail stations in the area or to neighbouring towns. It is therefore critically important that the transport plan should consider the impact of all the cars that will use the whole site and the effect that their use will have both on major and minor road networks.

We have commented on the travel plan submitted by Taylor Wimpey for 22/P/01175. These comments are equally applicable to this application. Taylor Wimpey suggest in section 12 of their Travel Plan *'that the effects of the development on the highway network without Burnt Common Slips are benign or beneficial. Indeed, it is the case that the Burnt Common slips are not necessarily required to mitigate the effects of the development on the local road network, as it has no severe effects in terms of the NPPF'*. However elsewhere in section 13 the applicant states *'that the changes in traffic flows set out in Section 12 mean the anticipated additional traffic arising from the proposed Wisley Development will not have a severe impact at Ripley Crossroads as flows will reduce due to the reassignment of traffic seen in the modelling. Nonetheless Taylor Wimpey would be prepared to support the resilience of the local infrastructure by making an appropriate contribution to the cost of delivery of the Burnt Common slips given the net benefit that they would bring to Ripley High Street and the amenity of the local road network generally, including to users of the cycle routes'*. Our concerns are amplified by this application and we are clear in our view that the effects of these two developments both singly and also taken together on the highway network cannot be described as benign. Far from it.

We take the view that this development will have a significant impact on road traffic in the surrounding area and it would be premature for this application to be considered for approval at this time in advance of the determination of 22/P/01175 but also because it does not meet the requirements of the transport strategy in policy A35 of the Guildford Local Plan and nor does it meet the requirements of the NPPF.

In our view this planning application should be withdrawn and only re-considered once all the infrastructure requirements for the whole Wisley airfield site have been satisfactorily addressed.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Strawson
Chairman